8. Chunar—Sone Barrage link
9. Sone Dam-Southern Tributaries of Ganga link
10. Manas-Sankosh-Tista-Ganga (MSTG) link
11. Jogighopa-Tista-Farakka link (alternate to MSTG) link
12. Farakka-Sunderbans link
13. Ganga-Damodar-Subernarekha link
14. Subernarekha-Mahanadi link

**Cleaning of Rivers and Lakes**

3039. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that due to siltification, big rivers, lakes, dam reservoirs get chocked, which results in loss of water as well as floods;

(b) if so, what is the estimate of Government regarding the quantum of loss per year;

(c) whether Government have identified certain rivers/reservoirs/lakes etc. for desiltification;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the schemes proposed to be undertaken; and

(e) what steps Government propose to take to improve the scenario and to make it labour friendly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) As per the report namely "Compendium on Silting of Reservoirs in the country (2001)" for 144 reservoirs, the weighted average annual loss in grass storage due to desiltation has been found to be 0.44%. In addition, as per the report of the Multidisciplinary Committee (2002) constituted by the Ministry of Water Resources under the Chairmanship of Dr. B.K. Mittal, former Chairman, Central Water Commission, siltation in rivers is not pronounced and alarming. The Third Minor Irrigation Census (2000-01) has mentioned that about 85,000 tanks and other storages are not in use predominantly due to siltation and other factors like lack of maintenance, encroachment, etc.

(c) to (e) Following the report of Dr. Mittal Committee, the Ministry of Water Resources constituted a Select Group under the Chairmanship of Chairman, Central Water Commission in order to identify action points in this regard. The action points *inter alia* included identificaion of vulnerable reaches along rivers by State Government have subsequently been forwarded to the State Governments to take necessary action in this regard. Govt. of India has also approved a pilot scheme "National Project for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies Directly Linked to Agriculture" in 2004-05 for a sanctioned outlay of Rs. 300 crores to be implemented during the remaining period of the X Five Year Plan. The objectives of the scheme are to restore the storage capacity and the irrigation potential of the water bodies.

The Central Water Commission has published a study report on siltation of reservoirs in January 2001 under the title "Compendium on silting of reservoirs in India". The report has addressed the issue of siltation of reservoirs and desiltation measures including dredging operations etc. It has been concluded that a better alternative is to increase the storage capacity of reservoirs in due consideration of the sediment loads providing arrangements for flushing of silt in the design of the dam and its operation schedule, in case of the new ones and raising of the dams whether it is technically feasible.

**Acute shortage of ground water in Rajasthan**

3040. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Rajasthan falls under the category of the State with acute shortage of potable drinking water;

(b) if so, whether Cental Government have any plan to provide special economic grant to Rajasthan by according special status to this State under National Water Policy;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) which are the other States, which have been accorded such special status;

(e) whether there are any towns in Rajasthan which have been covered under the Accelerated Urban Water Supply Programme till date; and